



IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A face information transmission system, comprising:

image acquisition means to acquire an image of a face of a subject;

first generation means ~~to generate~~for generating first image information relating to said subject and including positions of characteristic points of said face, based on the acquired image;

second generation means ~~for generating~~to generate second image information according to a facial expression of the face of said subject based on the generated first image information, said second image information being an image of a character that is different than said face of the subject;

transmission means ~~to transmit~~for transmitting the ~~generated second image information to a prescribed~~ image of the character to a different communication terminal,

utterance acquisition means ~~to acquire~~for acquiring utterances issued by said subject;
and

image judgment means ~~for judging~~to judge whether or not said first image information satisfies prescribed conditions,
wherein,

when said image judgment means judges that said first image information satisfies prescribed conditions, said second generation means performs a first process for generating~~generates~~ second image information according to the facial expression of the face of said subject based, at least, on said first image information, and

when said image judgment means judges that said first image information does not satisfy prescribed conditions, said second generation means performs a second process for

~~generating~~generates second image information according to the facial expression of the face of said subject based on said utterances,

said second process being a different computer-implemented process than said first process and does not use information regarding the positions of characteristic points of said face-

Claim 2 (Canceled).

Claim 3 (Currently Amended): The face information transmission system according to Claim 1, further comprising:

phoneme identification means for identifying s-to-identify phonemes corresponding to an utterance acquired by said utterance acquisition means; and

phoneme judgment means for judgingto-judge whether an identified phoneme satisfies prescribed conditions,

wherein,

when said phoneme judgment means judges that said phoneme satisfies prescribed conditions, said second generation means generates second image information according to the facial expression of the face of said subject based, at least, on said phoneme, and

when said phoneme judgment means judges that said phoneme does not satisfy prescribed conditions, said second generation means generates second image information according to the facial expression of the face of said subject based on said first image information.

Claim 4 (Original): The face information transmission system according to Claim 3, wherein, when neither said first image information nor said phoneme satisfies the respective

prescribed conditions and said utterance cannot be acquired, said second generation means employs image information determined in advance as said second image information.

Claim 5 (Original): The face information transmission system according to Claim 1, wherein said first image information comprises information to identify the distribution of said characteristic points in the face of said subject.

Claim 6 (Original): The face information transmission system according to Claim 1, wherein said image acquisition means acquires images of said face along a time series, and said first generation means generates said first image information including displacements in the positions of said characteristic points along a time series based on the acquired images.

Claim 7 (Original): The face information transmission system according to Claim 6, wherein said first image information includes information to identify the movement of said characteristic points relative to the face of said subject.

Claim 8 (Currently Amended): A face information transmission system, comprising:
an image acquisition mechanism configured to acquire an image of a face of a subject;
a first generation mechanism configured to generate first image information relating to said subject and including positions of characteristic points of said face, based on the acquired image;

a second generation mechanism configured to generate second image information according to a facial expression of the face of said subject based on the generated first image information, said second image information being an image of a character that is different than said face of the subject;

a transmission mechanism configured to transmit the image of the character to a different generated second image information to a prescribed communication terminal;

an utterance acquisition mechanism configured to acquire utterances issued by said subject; and

an image judgment mechanism configured to judge whether or not said first image information satisfies prescribed conditions,

wherein,

when said image judgment mechanism judges that said first image information satisfies prescribed conditions, said second generation mechanism performs a first process to generate generates second image information according to the facial expression of the face of said subject based, at least, on said first image information, and

when said image judgment mechanism judges that said first image information does not satisfy prescribed conditions, said second generation mechanism performs a second process to generate generates second image information according to the facial expression of the face of said subject based on said utterances,

said second process being a different computer-implemented process than said first process and does not use information regarding the positions of characteristic points of said face.

Claim 9 (Original): The face information transmission system according to Claim 8, further comprising:

a phoneme identification mechanism configured to identify phonemes corresponding to an utterance acquired by said utterance acquisition mechanism; and

a phoneme judgment mechanism configured to judge whether an identified phoneme satisfies prescribed conditions,

wherein, when said phoneme judgment mechanism judges that said phoneme satisfies prescribed conditions, said second generation mechanism generates second image information according to the facial expression of the face of said subject based, at least, on said phoneme, and when said phoneme judgment mechanism judges that said phoneme does not satisfy prescribed conditions, said second generation mechanism generates second image information according to the facial expression of the face of said subject based on said first image information.

Claim 10 (Original): The face information transmission system according to Claim 9, wherein, when neither said first image information nor said phoneme satisfies the respective prescribed conditions and said utterance cannot be acquired, said second generation mechanism employs image information determined in advance as said second image information.

Claim 11 (Original): The face information transmission system according to Claim 8, wherein said first image information comprises information to identify the distribution of said characteristic points in the face of said subject.

Claim 12 (Original): The face information transmission system according to Claim 8, wherein said image acquisition mechanism acquires images of said face along a time series, and said first generation mechanism generates said first image information including displacements in the positions of said characteristic points along a time series based on the acquired images.

Claim 13 (Original): The face information transmission system according to Claim 12, wherein said first image information includes information to identify the movement of said characteristic points relative to the face of said subject.

Claim 14 (New): The system of Claim 1, wherein said second generation means performs said second process without using said first image information.

Claim 15 (New): The system of Claim 14, wherein said second generation means only uses information about said utterances as input data for said second process.

Claim 16 (New) A computer-implemented method, comprising steps of:

- acquiring and storing in memory information of a facial expression of a face of a subject;
- acquiring and storing in memory information of an utterance;
- analyzing the information of the facial expression;
- analyzing the information of the utterance;
- generating character image information of a character image based at least said information of the facial expression according to a first process when the information of the facial expression satisfies predetermined conditions, said character image being different than said face of the subject;
- generating the character image information based at least on said information of an utterance using a second process that is different from the first process when the information of the facial expression does not satisfy predetermined conditions, said second process does not use information regarding the positions of characteristic points of the face; and
- transmitting the character image information.

Claim 17 (New) The method according to claim 16, wherein:

the second process does not use as input the information of the facial expression.

Claim 18 (New) A method according to claim 17, wherein:

the second process uses as input only the information of the utterance.

Claim 19 (New) The method according to claim 16, further comprising:

inputting instruction information from a user indicating a facial expression;

generating information corresponding to the character image, using the instruction information; and

transmitting the information corresponding to the character image that was generated using the instruction information.

Claim 20 (New) The method according to claim 16, wherein:

the inputting of instruction information inputs instruction information corresponding to at least one of laughing, crying, and surprise.